







# OCTOBER ISSUE

## WHO WE ARE

The Asian Art Society features an online catalogue every month listing quality works of Asian art that have been thoroughly vetted by our select members, who are the in-house experts.

By bringing together a group of trusted dealers specializing in Asian art, our platform offers a unique collection of works of art that collectors will not find anywhere else online. To ensure the highest standards, gallery membership is by invitation only and determined by a selection committee of influential gallerists

  /AsianArtSociety

**Cover Image:** Vajravarahi figure  
presented by Kapoor Galleries on  
p. 16

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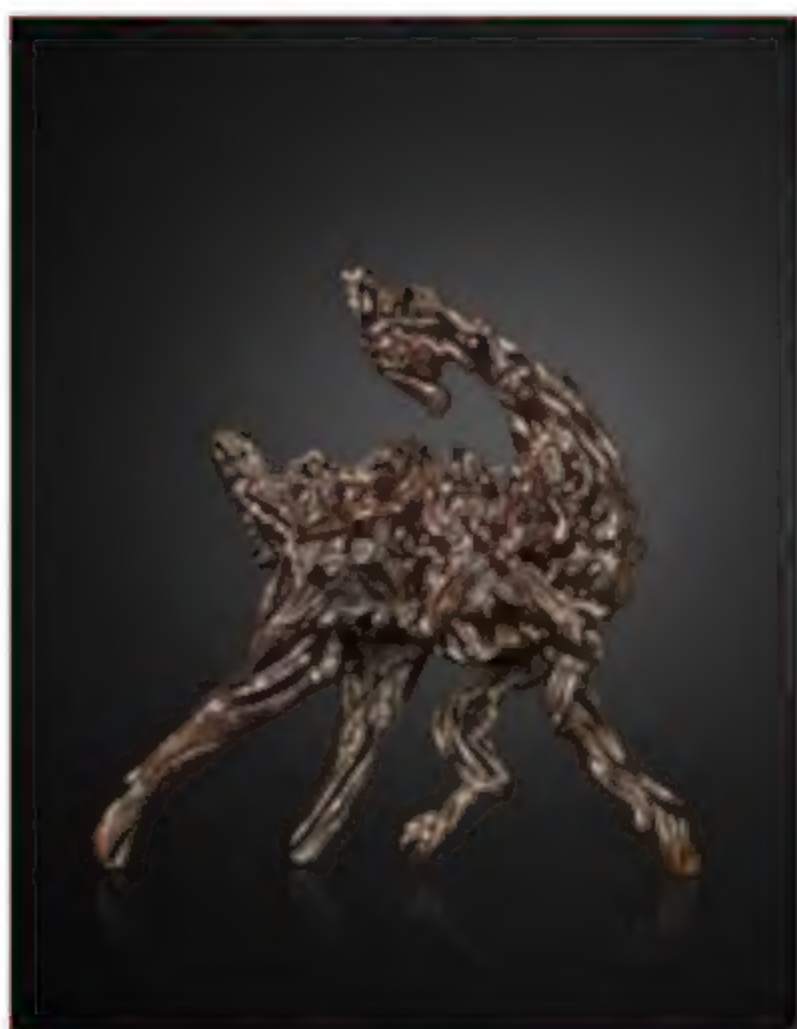
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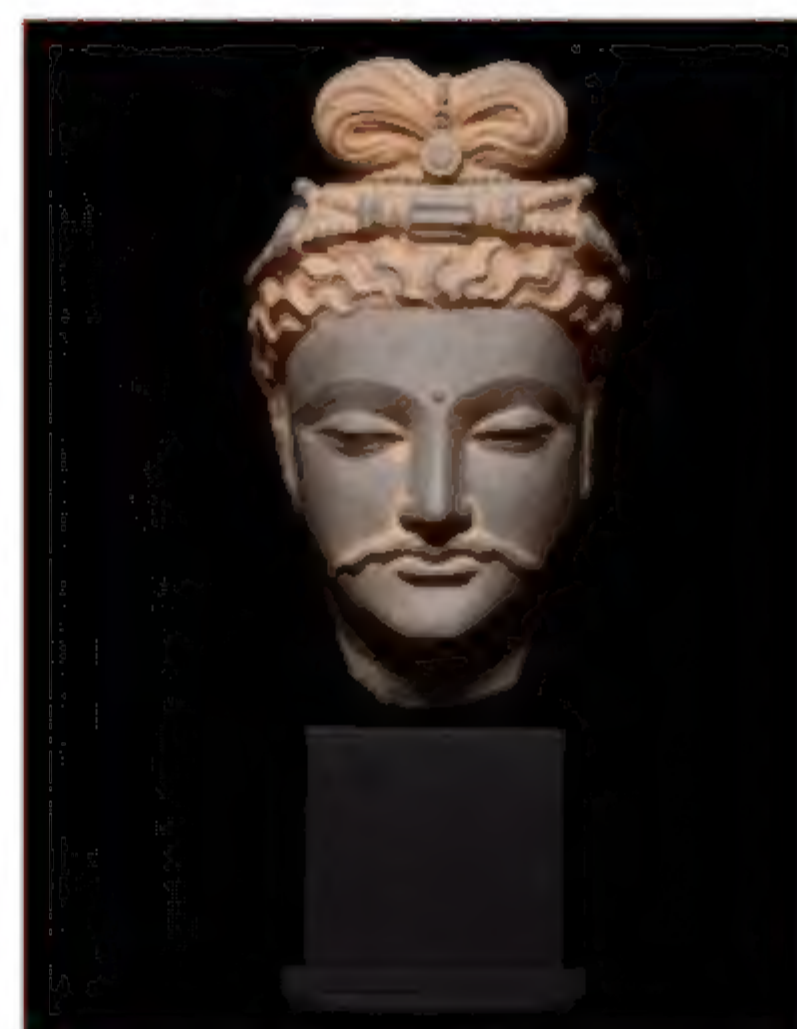
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ONLINE CATALOGUE XII



# NEW EDITION

We are celebrating our first year anniversary ! Already 12 catalogues that you can still check online :  
<https://www.theasianartsociety.com/catalogues-1>

We thank you for sharing this journey together and we hope you will enjoy this new edition.  
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# OCTOBER ART WORKS

Pieces are published and changed each month. The objects are presented with a full description and corresponding dealers contact information. Unlike auction sites or other platforms, we empower collectors to interact directly with the member dealers for enquiries and purchases by clicking on the e-mail adress.

In order to guarantee the quality of pieces available in the catalogues, objects are systematically validated by all our select members, who are the in-house experts.. Collectors are therefore encouraged to decide and buy with complete confidence. In addition to this, the Asian Art Society proposes a seven-day full money back return policy should the buyer not feel totally satisfied with a purchase.

Items are presented by categories, please check the table of contents. Feel free to ask the price if the artwork is listed with a price on request.



01

## PORTRAIT OF A DERVISH

Follower of Sadeqi Beg or Reza I Abbasi

Isfahan, Iran

First half of 17th century

Black line drawing, polychrome pigments and gold on paper

Page : 23 cm x 16 cm

Miniature : 14,6 cm x 8 cm

Provenance:

Private collection, France

Price: 16.000 euros

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Alexis Renard

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This fine drawing depicts a dervish wearing a headdress similar to that of the Mawlawi Sufis of Anatolia – an order founded in Konya in the 13th century by Jalal al Din Rumi. These dervishes are known for their sema dances, during which they turn on themselves faster and faster to access a form of trance, their arms outstretched, one hand turned towards the sky to receive the grace of Allah, and the other facing the ground to transmit it to the earth.

An interesting detail here is the presence of a luxurious ornamental cord beneath the dervish's clothing, as well as a decorative earring.

Unfortunately the absence of a signature means that the drawing cannot be attributed to any artist with certainty. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the varying line thicknesses created using the weight of the qalam are similar to calligraphic lines. They are applied decisively, too, as if the subject was painted on the spot. The dervish leans forward in a pose that is similar to certain drawings by Reza Abbasi, but the spirited treatment, the shape of the hat and the depiction of the face are closer to the style of Sadiqi Beg Afshar (1533–1610); this important poet, writer and painter was the director of a manuscript workshop under Shah Abbas in Qazvin at the end of the 16th century.

A Sadiqi drawing of a dervish is held in the collections of the Harvard Art Museums (Sackler 1936.23).

Another drawing by Sadiqi is held at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (Inv. n. 14.636), and published in: Weinstein, L. (2015), *Ink, Silk & Gold: Islamic Art from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, MFA Publications, p. 108, n. 69.

For a complete study of the works of Reza Abbasi, see: Canby, S. (1996), *The Rebellious Reformer*, London: Azimuth Editions. A comparable drawing dated 1631 and signed by Abbasi, representing the dervish 'Abd al-Mottalib, is published on p. 150, cat. 106.

See also a related drawing attributed to Reza Abbasi held at the Louvre Museum (MAO 145).















02

## FOUR-ARMED MAHAKALA WITH CONSORT

Tibet

18th-19th century

Ground mineral pigment on cloth

76,3 cm x 54,4 cm

Provenance:

The Mactaggart collection.

Bonhams Hong Kong, 3 Oct 2017, lot 28.

Private collection, California.

Price: 150.000 USD

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Kapoor Galleries

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Teachers, worldly deities, protectors, and wrathful retinue figures coalesce in this cloud and flame-filled composition replete with gruesome charnel ground scenes and white-clad *ngagpa* practicing within. A four-armed blue-black protector and his consort trample a supine human corpse with a pained expression at center, demonstrating their power to destroy ego. The central figure holds a blazing sword and bloody heart in his two proper-left hands and a skullcup and trident in his right, identifying him as a form of Mahakala or Gonpo Nagpo Chenpo. His dwarfish and big-bellied body is partially concealed by the backside of his female counterpart, who holds a curved knife and skull cup (unseen). Their sexual embrace is depicted here in an explicit manner, atypical among other traditional depictions of this figure. Below Mahakala and his consort, groups of blood-thirsty animals await the flesh of his fierce retinue's mortal victims while an assembly of humans and demi-gods observe.

This particular form of Four-Armed Mahakala was transmitted from Ga Lotsawa to the great *terton* or treasure revealer, Nyangrel Nyima Ozer (1136-1204), who modified the meditation script to better suit Nyingma practice. As such, the human figures at the top of the composition, surrounding Padmasambhava at center, are Nyima Ozer's lineage. The retinue figures here are telling of this specific identity. The Nyingma protector Rahula stands out the most with his many heads, his serpentine lower half, the wrathful face that constitutes his belly, and the thousand eyes that cover his otherworldly appearance. Shingkong, the lion-faced, blue bodied, protector on the opposite side, is also unusual to see beside Four-Armed Mahakala (see Jeff Watt, [himalayanart.org](http://himalayanart.org), set 4200).

The present image of the enlightened four-armed protector with his consort and retinue is particularly dynamic—with a packed and complex composition that reflects the forcefully purifying enlightened activity of the deities. This visual support is clearly intended for an advanced practitioner with the wisdom to grasp subversive imagery and the ability to hold the copious aesthetic details in their mind's eye. Outside its traditional context the painting sustains great visual impact. The anonymous artist should be lauded for the creative and unique approach to this meditative formula.











03

## CITIPATI / ŚMĀŚANA ADIPATI :-THE MALE AND FEMALE LORDS OF THE CREMATION GROUND

Tibet

14-15th century

Soap stone

Height: 9,3 cm

Provenance:

The Nyingjei Lam collection

On loan to the Ashmolean Museum,  
Oxford, 1996–2005

On loan to the Rubin Museum of Art,  
New York 2005-2018

Price on request

Commonly known as Citipati (meaning 'Lord of the Funeral Pyre') these Guardians of the Cremation Ground invariably depicted as a pair of male and female skeletons in a dancing pose. They are intended to be quite terrifying with a gruesome smile on their skull-faces but this function is intended to scare only those who enter the graveyard with improper intentions. Such intruders might include tantric vow-breakers who wish to misuse the cemetery for evil rituals or thieves who intend to rob the deceased person's remains. In addition to these obvious protective roles they also act as encouraging presences for those meditators whose proper tantric rituals require the use of a cemetery as a place for meditation on impermanence and death itself.

For more information, please visit:

<https://hollywood-galleries.com/chitipati-nying-jei-lam>

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04

## A BRONZE FIGURE OF VAJRABARAHI

Tibet

Pala Style

12th century

Height: 24 cm

Provenance:

A private Swiss collection.

Sothebys, New York, March 19th, 2008,  
lot 301.

Koller, Zurich, 1986.

Price: 180.000 USD

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The present form of Vajrayogini, Vajravarahi or Dorje Phagmo to Tibetans, is a sow-headed manifestation of the goddess, who is the principal female deity of the Chakrasamvara cycle of tantras. Vajravarahi is particularly significant within the Karma Kagyu and other Kagyu traditions wherein she serves as an important meditational deity or yidam. While she is a fully enlightened being who embodies buddhahood in tantric female form, she is often referred to as a dakini or khandroma ('sky goer') in accordance with early Indian traditions.

The goddess holds up a kartrika in her right hand and a kapala in her left. She dons a skull tiara, a necklace of pendant jewels and a heavy garland of severed heads hung on twisted rope. Her semi-wrathful expression is rendered with sharp canines emerging from the corners of her mouth. The present figure of the dakini is, nevertheless, elegant and poised. She dances on the toes of her left foot with her right leg slightly raised, demonstrating the lightness, space, and bliss that come along with fully realizing emptiness. Blending grace and power, the robust goddess centers her weight effortlessly on flexed toes, achieving an accomplished posture. The lifelike sow's head that identifies her projects boldly from the proper-right side of her head.

The present sculpture, cast in a beautifully-patinated metal alloy is inset with colourful semi-precious stones, inspired by the bronzes of Pala India of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, from where the cult of the deity herself originates. Compare the posture and details such as the style of the severed heads hung on twisted rope with a twelfth century Indian bronze Vajradaka published by Ulrich von Schroeder in *Buddhist Sculptures in Tibet*, Hong Kong, 2001, p. 295, fig. 98E.







05

## A PAIR OF RED ARMCHAIRS

Shanxi province, China

Ming dynasty

16th or 17th century

Red lacquered Elm southern

Height: 101 cm

Width: 57,2 cm

Depth: 42 cm

Provenance:

Private East Asian collection

Price: 10.000 USD

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Rasti Chinese Art

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A pair of partially red lacquered Elm southern official's hat armchairs, the square curved backrests with two openwork panels, the arms supported by beadwork supports above curved and flanged aprons below the footrests and stretchers

For a similar pair of lacquered chairs, see Evarts, Curtis, C. L. Ma Collection: Traditional Chinese Furniture from the Greater Shanxi Region, pp. 100-1, no. 26.







06

## SHANXI TABLE

Shanxi province, China

16th or 17th century

Red lacquered softwood

Width: 107,3 cm

Depth: 67 cm

Height: 88 cm

Provenance:

Private East Asian collection

Price: 22.000 USD

A red lacquered softwood rectangular table with overhanging top above spandrel head aprons enclosed by tapering rounded legs, fitted with single stretchers to the front and double stretchers to the sides, the top with remains of heavy lacquer.

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07

## CHINESE PENDENT

China

Neolithic period

Stone

Height: 12 cm

Length: 4,7 cm

Provenance:

Collected in the West part of  
the Island of Borneo, Indonesia.

Price : 900 euros

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Most likely a Chinese handicraft, taken along by the first Chinese migrants that arrived in the Island of Borneo during the First Millenium B.C.





08

## CHINESE GAMES TABLE

Shanxi province, China  
17th or 18th century  
Black lacquered softwood  
Width and Length: 87 cm  
Height: 84,5 cm  
Price: 24.000 USD

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A black lacquered softwood square detachable games table with humpback stretchers and square legs terminating in horse hoof feet, fitted to the sides with four sliding drawers, the top lifting to reveal a covered recessed central well surrounded by four covered boxes to each corner to hold gaming pieces.

For two black lacquered wood detachable chess and card tables, see The Complete Collection of Ming and Qing Furniture in the Palace Museum: Vol. 9, Table, pp. 906-945.



















09

**SEATED MĀRAVIJAYA  
BUDDHA**

Thailand

Kingdom of Chiang Saen (14th-16th  
century)

Circa 15th century

Bronze

Height: 33 cm

Provenance:

Private collection, France.

Price: 20.000 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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In northern Thailand, the city of Chiang Saen, founded in 1327, was the capital of the small vassal Lanna Kingdom with which it shared a varied history. The city was an active centre for bronze-casters who had their own characteristic style. It is thought that Sukhothai casters came north and helped create this particular aesthetic style. Indeed, it has certain traits of the Sukhothai style, such as the slightly hooked nose, the eyebrows arching to the bridge of the nose, and the hair in tiny juxtaposed curls. To this is added the influence of Indian sculpture. The result is a different rendering, closer to the spirit of classical Indian Buddhist statuary, more vigorous, present and majestic. This Buddha is a perfect example. The smoothness of the facial features, the chin, underlined on both sides by an incised line, and the ears with pointed ends bending outwards: all this is characteristic of the Chiang Saen (and Lanna) style.

Śākyamuni Buddha is the embodiment of spiritual compassion, and this bronze demonstrates this nature in a very beautiful way. The face is noble, well-balanced and graceful. The eyes with half-closed eyelids underline his serene meditation. Finally, the modelling is handled with great care and there is an obvious harmony in the proportions of the body and in the facial features.

In iconographic terms, Śākyamuni Buddha is depicted here at the moment of his Awakening. This occurs while he is seated, here on a lotiform base and an openwork pedestal, in the so-called "noble" attitude, with his right leg folded over his left leg. This is an absolutely fundamental moment in Buddhism: he then touches the earth with his fingertips and sketches the gesture of "Calling the Earth to witness" (bhūmisparśa mudrā). At this moment Buddha is indeed victorious over Māra (Māravijaya), the demon of death and temptation, who was trying to distract him from his meditation. He thus achieves Enlightenment and shows his good faith in having vowed to bring deliverance to all beings.

Covered with a green patina and beautiful remains of gilding, the piece has an extremely decorative character.











10

## HINDU-JAVANESE HEAD

Sculpture  
Indonesia  
Majapahit Kingdom  
13th century  
Volcanic tuff  
Height: 10 cm  
Length: 9,5 cm  
Price: 1.400 euros

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It represents Semar, one of the three brothers-clowns at the Raja court.















11

**A SHEET -GOLD  
PECTORAL**

Timor, Indonesia

19-20th century

Diam: 12,8 cm

Provenance:

Private German collection

Price: 3.500 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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A circular sheet-gold pectoral with a simple design of bull and moon. This rare and superb gold disc pectoral is from West Timor, probably from the Meo subgroup of the Atoni tribe. It was used as a badge of honor, in former times awarded in association with head hunting or the birth of a male child.







12

## KALI TRAMPLING SHIVA

Jaipur, Rajasthan

18th century

Opaque watercolor heightened with  
gold on paper

Image: 18,1 cm x 11,4 cm

Folio: 25,1 cm x 18,4 cm

Provenance:

Nik Douglas, British Virgin Islands, 17

December 1982.

The James and Marilyn Alsdorf

Collection, Chicago.

Price: 26.000 USD

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According to Hindu mythology, there was once a powerful demon named Raktabija who received a boon allowing him to replicate himself whenever a drop of his blood touched the earth. When the demon engaged in battle with the gods, Kali spread her tongue over the battlefield to prevent any of the demon's blood from hitting the ground, thus facilitating his defeat. Kali, however, became drunk with bloodlust and after her victory, the goddess went on a rampage. She proceeded to kill anyone who crossed her path, adorning herself with the dismembered parts of her victims. Afraid that Kali would not stop until she destroyed all the cosmos, Shiva laid down on the battlefield in her path. Upon seeing her consort beneath her foot, she suddenly realized her mistake and halted her spree. This painting illustrates the moment Shiva pacifies Kali, appearing in her form as Dakshinakali, the benevolent mother. Dakshinakali is typically depicted with her right foot on Shiva's chest, while her more fearsome form as Vamakali is usually shown with her left foot on his chest. She holds a severed head and scimitar in two of her four hands and wears a skirt of dismembered arms from her rampage. Kali's typical garland of severed heads is replaced here with a string of severed heads around her chignon, and her large, outstretched tongue drips with the blood of her victims. A pale, prostrate Shiva lays below, gazing up at Kali. By presenting Kali as literally trampling Shiva, this archetypal image demonstrates the extent to which Shiva's transcendental power is only possible through interaction with Kali.











# 13

## A RECTANGULAR GOLD PENDANT SET WITH RUBIES AND EMERALDS

South India  
19th century  
Weight: 14,98 g  
Price: 4.000 GBP

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A lovely rectangular pendant set with a filigree center rubies and emeralds the reverse is decorated with a relief motif in gold.





14

## A LARGE CARVED EMERALD RING

North India  
Early 20th century  
1,4 cm X 2,4 cm  
Size: US 6,5  
Weight: 17,680 g  
Price: 7.500 GBP

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A Large Carved emerald set in gold with beautiful enamel work on the reverse.









15

## GANEŚA

Eastern India

Pala period

10th century

Bronze

Height: 8 cm

Provenance:

Private collection, Germany.

Price: 5.000 euros

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Made in bronze and dated from the 10th century, the piece comes from Eastern India in the heart of the Pala kingdom and is 8 cm high. Well-known as the elephant-headed god, Ganeśa is one of the most popular gods in the Hindu pantheon, as can be seen by the great number of replicas throughout the Subcontinent. He is worshiped fervently by all: both lower castes and Brahmans, who offer up a prayer to him before every ceremony.

Light is a metaphor for wisdom: Ganeśa, the god of knowledge, removes obstacles and makes rituals, as well as any human undertaking, run smoothly. He is therefore particularly worshiped on this festive day.

As usual, this beautiful bronze depicts the god with a protuberant belly and sitting in *lalitasana*. From his first right hand he holds a round sweet, while with his second left hand he brandishes the ax that serves to destroy all negative forces. He has only one tusk because he broke off the second to transcribe the epic saga of the *Mahābhārata*.

Characteristic of the Pala period, the details of the face and the hairstyle in ascetic bun are finely rendered. A worshiper in a praying position kneels at his feet.











# 16

## A PAIR OF DIAMOND AND ENAMEL EARRINGS

Jaipur, India  
19th century  
Diameter: 2,2 cm  
Weight: 16 g  
Price: 6.000 GBP

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Large table cut diamonds set in the *kundan* style in green enamel and a red and white flower in enamel on the reverse









17

## PĀLA STELE OF SŪRYA

Northern India

Pāla period

Circa 10th century

Phyllite stone

Height: 68 cm

Provenance:

Private collection, France.

Price: 28.000 euros

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Radiant Pāla stele made of sandstone, measuring 68 cm high (or 26 ¾ in), representing Sūrya, the Sun god and featuring all the characteristics of Pāla art of the 10th century in Northern India.

The characteristics of the god are numerous, and here rendered with care. Sūrya, with such a distinctive smile, particularly nice here, is standing full-front and in absolute symmetry. Depicted with a halo, wearing a royal tiara and heavy jewels, he is holding a lotus flower in each hand. His tall boots – a characteristic of the god's iconography – are attributable to his Iranian origin. Sūrya stands majestically on his chariot driven by Aru a handling the seven dynamic horses, all depicted in the lower part.

On either side of the god are two assistants and their consorts. On the left, a slightly chubby Pi gala is holding the stylus and inkwell he needs to note down the good and bad acts of men during the daytime. His wife is Darkness.

On the right one recognizes Da a traditionally armed with a sword, guardian of the residence of the Sun, along with his consort Light.

Sūrya's two wives, Dawn and Dusk, of smaller size, are shooting arrows shaped like the rays of the sun.

The beauty of this stele lies in the balance between iconographic richness and stylistic sobriety. The undeniable clarity of the sculpted details, the elegance of the characters, the full and non-open background or the still quite rounded top are all elements that make it possible to advance an early date, circa 10th century. All this makes the piece even more remarkable.



















18

**INDIAN GULAB PASH**

Rosewater Sprinkler

Deccan, India

18th century

Solid silver

Height : 32,5 cm

Weight : 780 g

Provenance:

Formerly in a private English collection

Price: 6.500 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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The weight of this luxurious sprinkler reveals an abundant use of silver. The shoulder's ornamentation reminds of vegetal palmettes, and the ornamentation is broadly inspired by the Mughal repertoire, with an exuberant twist emblematic of the Deccan region.

For an 18th century Surahi bottle with similar palmettes, see: Exhibition catalogue, Fabri-Terlinden C.S (dir.), *Mughal silver magnificence (16-th-19th S.)*, Brussels: Antalga, 1987, fig. 155, p. 114.







# 19

## ILLUSTRATION TO THE DEVI MAHATMYA: THE BEAUTY OF AMBIKA

Guler

Circa 1810

Gouache heightened with gold  
on paper

20,9 cm x 30,5 cm

Provenance:

Christies, London, 10 October 1989,  
lot 70

Price: 30.000 USD

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Sumbha, the *asura* described in the fifth chapter of the Devi Mahatmya, is depicted here on an outdoor terrace under a shamiana. He is flanked by fanged attendants who carry morchals and chowries. Two lesser asuras, Chanda and Munda, stand before him and regail him with stories of Ambika's beauty:

*"O great king there is an exceedingly beautiful woman whose queenly beauty is illuminating the Himalaya. No-one has ever seen such sublime loveliness anywhere. Find out who that goddess is and take possession of Her, O Lord of Asuras. She is a gem among women, with exquisitely beautiful limbs which illuminate the four directions with their lustre. There she stands, O King of Demons."*















20

**AN UNUSUAL  
GOLD AND RUBY  
NECKLACE**

South India  
18th - 19th century  
Length: 29 cm  
Price: 7.500 GBP

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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W: [www.ollemans.com](http://www.ollemans.com)

15 Faceted gold beads inset with rubies, spinels, emeralds and pearls interspersed with cloth beads covered in gold thread.







21

## CHINNAMASTA

Jaipur, Rajasthan

18th century

Opaque watercolor heightened  
with gold on paper

Image: 18,1 cm x 11,4 cm

Folio: 22.5 cm x 17,5 cm

Provenance:

Nik Douglas, British Virgin Islands,  
17 December 1982.

The James and Marilyn Alsdorf  
Collection, Chicago.

Price: 26.000 USD

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Kapoor Galleries

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E.: [info@kapoorgalleries.com](mailto:info@kapoorgalleries.com)

W: [www.kapoorgalleries.com](http://www.kapoorgalleries.com)

In the Hindu tradition, Chinnamasta (or 'Severed Head') is one of the ten *mahavidyas* (incarnations of the great goddess Devi). According to the *Pranatosini-tantra*, Parvati was bathing in the wilderness with two yoginis, Dakini and Varnini, when they became famished. Parvati resolved to decapitate herself so that they may be nourished by her blood, thus embodying Chinnamasta.

Here, the goddess appears seated on a throne, worshipped by a ruler and his wife kneeling beside her, holding a scimitar in her right hand and her own head on a platter in her left. A crown sits just above her third eye, while thin wisps of hair hang loose and her tongue lolls. The goddess is adorned with pearl and emerald jewelry, and her skin is rendered a characteristic orange-red complexion. Thin streams of blood can be seen flowing from her neck to the mouths of the yoginis that flank her. Chinnamasta's iconography encompasses elements of both terror and heroism by way of severing her own head and then offering her blood for nourishment, ultimately symbolizing the transformations of death and life.







22

**INDIAN KATAR  
DECORATED WITH  
PAGODAS**

India

17th - 18th century

Steel damascened with gold

Height : 49 cm

Price: 6.500 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Alexis Renard

T.: + 33 1 44 07 33 02

E.: [alexis@alexisrenard.com](mailto:alexis@alexisrenard.com)

W: [www.alexisrenard.com](http://www.alexisrenard.com)

This beautiful Katar is decorated with a Chinese influence design in the *Koftgari* technique, as fine as the very refined and precious inlaid work from the same period. It is rare to find a piece decorated with *koftgari* of such quality.















# 23

## PORTRAIT OF A PORTUGUESE MAN SMOKING

Bundi, Rajasthan, India

18th century

Pigments, silver and gold on paper

Height : 25 cm

Width : 20 cm

Price: 8.000 euros

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Alexis Renard

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W: www.alexisrenard.com

The well-dressed central character in this scene sits comfortably under a flowering tree, with his back resting on a cushion, smoking a curved pipe. His fair hair is enhanced by the use of gold paint, and on his head he wears a large hat, or *topi*, typical of the Portuguese hats. The artist has also added some Indian touches to his outfit, such as the Indo-Persian bazu-band around his upper-left arm.

A young woman (probably European, as her blonde hair is also painted in gold), brings him a tray holding a jug and a blue-and-white ceramic bowl. The colourful textiles and carpets in the lower part of the painting enhance the freshness of the scene.

What emerges overall is a sense of these characters as seen through Indian eyes – both peculiar and exotic.

After its arrival in Europe around 1560, tobacco soon reached India, where by 1590 it had begun to be cultivated. It was soon very popular, with the use of water pipes or *huqqas* becoming typical status symbols amongst the Mughals, defining social rank alongside other valuables such as weaponry.











24

**A GOLD EMERALD,  
DIAMOND AND  
RUBY  
RING**

India

19th century

Size: US6

Price: 5.000 USD

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Sue Ollemans

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W: [www.ollemans.com](http://www.ollemans.com)

A square bezel is inset with a lovely square Colombian emerald surrounded with a row of foiled rubies. The shank is set with two floral sprays of diamonds holding the bezel.











25

## EROTIC SCENE DEPICTING A EUROPEAN COUPLE

Probably Bundi, Mewar, Rajasthan,  
Northern India

Circa 1700

Pigments and gold on paper

Height: 19,4 cm

Width: 13,7 cm

Provenance:

Seward Kennedy collection

Price: 18.000 euros

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Alexis Renard

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W: www.alexisrenard.com

This humorous miniature features a couple making love on a richly decorated palanquin, carried by four servants in a flowery field along a river.

The characters all wear European-style wigs and hats (or *topi*), clearly identifying them as Europeans, or *topiwallahs*. The two lovers are entirely naked apart from their hats, curly wigs and Indian jewellery.

A text written in black Devangari script at the top of the painting describes the scene. The position employed by the couple is described as the 'guardian of happiness' (*sukhpāl*) position, referring to the type of palanquin that a bridegroom sits on when leading the procession of the *barāt*, during a classical Indian wedding ceremony.

The following lines seem to describe the exact positioning that lovers must adopt, including such phrases as 'the man should sit in order to achieve his pleasure'.

This painting is probably an illustration of a *Kâmarshâstra*, a set of illustrations dedicated to the practice of love, the famous *Kamasutra* being a part of this set.

Other miniatures, probably from the same series, are published in: P. Rawson (1979), *L'Art Érotique de l'Inde*, London: Blacker Calmann Cooper Ltd / Paris: Éditions du Chêne, N° 35 & 36. One of these depicts European lovers in the same position.

According to Rawson, albums of erotic miniatures were widely available in India, and were intended to entertain the aristocracy. The author explains that between 1630 and 1860, many Rajput courts in Rajasthan and Punjab maintained workshops of painters to illustrate popular themes. These types of miniatures may also have been created to stimulate their readers.

The representation of European characters (*firangi*) in erotic works demonstrates an evolution in the way that these foreigners were perceived by Indians. Having initially appeared in paintings that employed a curious, yet documentary, approach, as the 18th century progressed, this shifted towards a more fantasised style of portraiture, often with elements of irony or caricature.







॥सुषपालाशसननाम॥ छंदश्चरित्॥ सेजस  
मेसुषसोयरही॥ त्रियाचरणएककंचगही॥ नर  
बेचके जोगबनायलीयो॥ जबनामनीस्पीमसुं  
मनदीयो॥ ७९॥









# 26

## RIMPA-SCHOOL SCREEN WITH AUTUMN FLOWERS

A two-fold screen

Japan

Edo period

17th century

Gold, silver and ink on paper

173 cm x 195 cm

Price:

SOLD

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Gregg Baker Asian Art

M.: +32 468 00 56 85

E.: [info@japanesescreens.com](mailto:info@japanesescreens.com)

W: [www.japanesescreens.com](http://www.japanesescreens.com)

A two-fold paper screen painted in gold, silver and ink on a buff ground depicting an autumnal scene with *kiku* (chrysanthemum), *hagi* (bush clover), *susuki* (pampas grass), *morokoshi* (sorghum) and *nasu* (aubergine)

Sealed: *Inen*

The 'Inen' seal is regarded as a trademark of the Tawaraya workshop, led by Tawaraya Sōtatsu (died ca.1640), who co-founded the Rimpa school with Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637). Sōtatsu is known to have used the 'Inen' seal himself, although only until he was granted the honorary title of *Hokkyō* in or around 1624. *Hokkyō* literally 'Bridge of the Law', is the third highest honorary title, initially bestowed upon priests and then from the 11th century on Buddhist sculptors. From the 15th century the title was also given to artists. Around 1620 the leading pupil of the Tawaraya workshop was given the "Inen" seal by Sōtatsu and is referred to as the 'Painter of the Inen seal'.

Japanese interest in chrysanthemum as a theme for poetry developed during the Heian period. With the evolution of a native artistic sensibility at that time which was heavily influenced by the passing seasons, the flower gained its place as one of the premier symbols of autumn. In many instances, chrysanthemums appear in ensemble motifs with all or some of the Seven Grasses of Autumn, and it is sometimes included in enumerations of this group.

For more details, please visit:

<http://japanesescreens.com/catalogue/screens/7355/>















27

**A RIMPA STYLE  
OKASHIKI (BOX FOR  
SWEETS)**

Japan

Wood and brown lacquer

Height: 6,5 cm

Base : 14 cm x 11 cm

Price:



**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Kitsune Gallery

M.: + 32 476 87 85 69

E.: [arie.vos@kitsune.be](mailto:arie.vos@kitsune.be)

W: [www.kitsunegaroo.com](http://www.kitsunegaroo.com)

The scene on this lidded box, consisting of irises alongside a planked bridge, was inspired by an episode from the Ise Monogatari (the tales of Ise) and made after the design of Ogata Korin. Lead strips are placed over the bare wood to depict a series of simple plank bridges. The leaves of the irises all around the bridges are in gold takamaki-e while the flowers are represented by glistening mother-of-pearl (raden) and lead. The edges of the lid are covered with brown lacquer. The inside of the lid is depicting the front part of a boat. This box comes with a hako (storage box) describing it as "Okashiki" (菓子器). The interior side of the lid referring to the scene of Ogata Korin (尾形光琳), eight bridges lacquer design (八橋蒔絵).

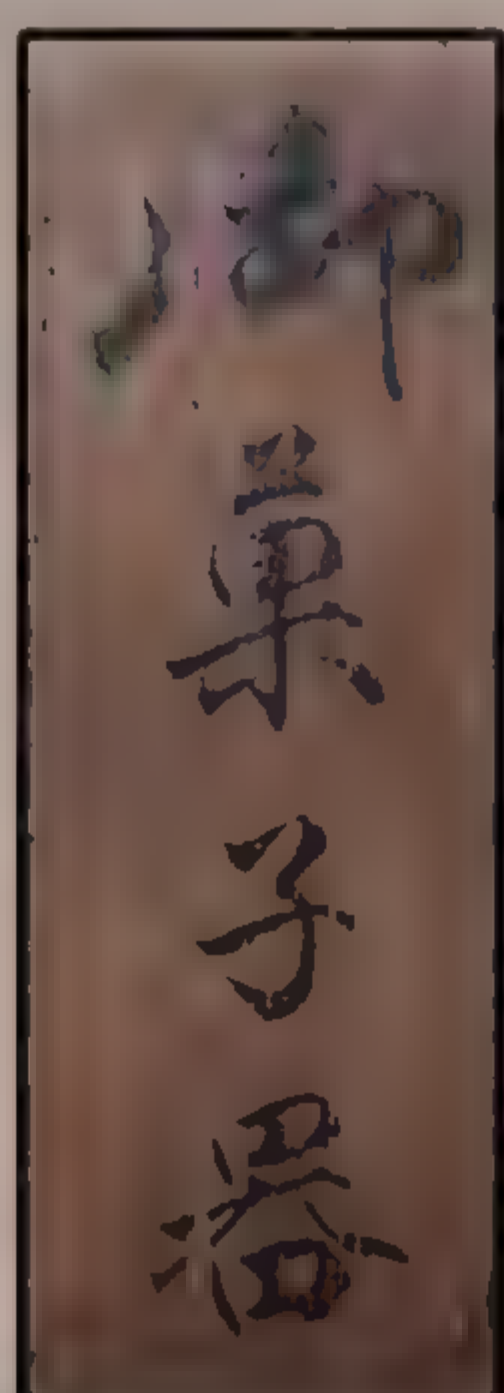
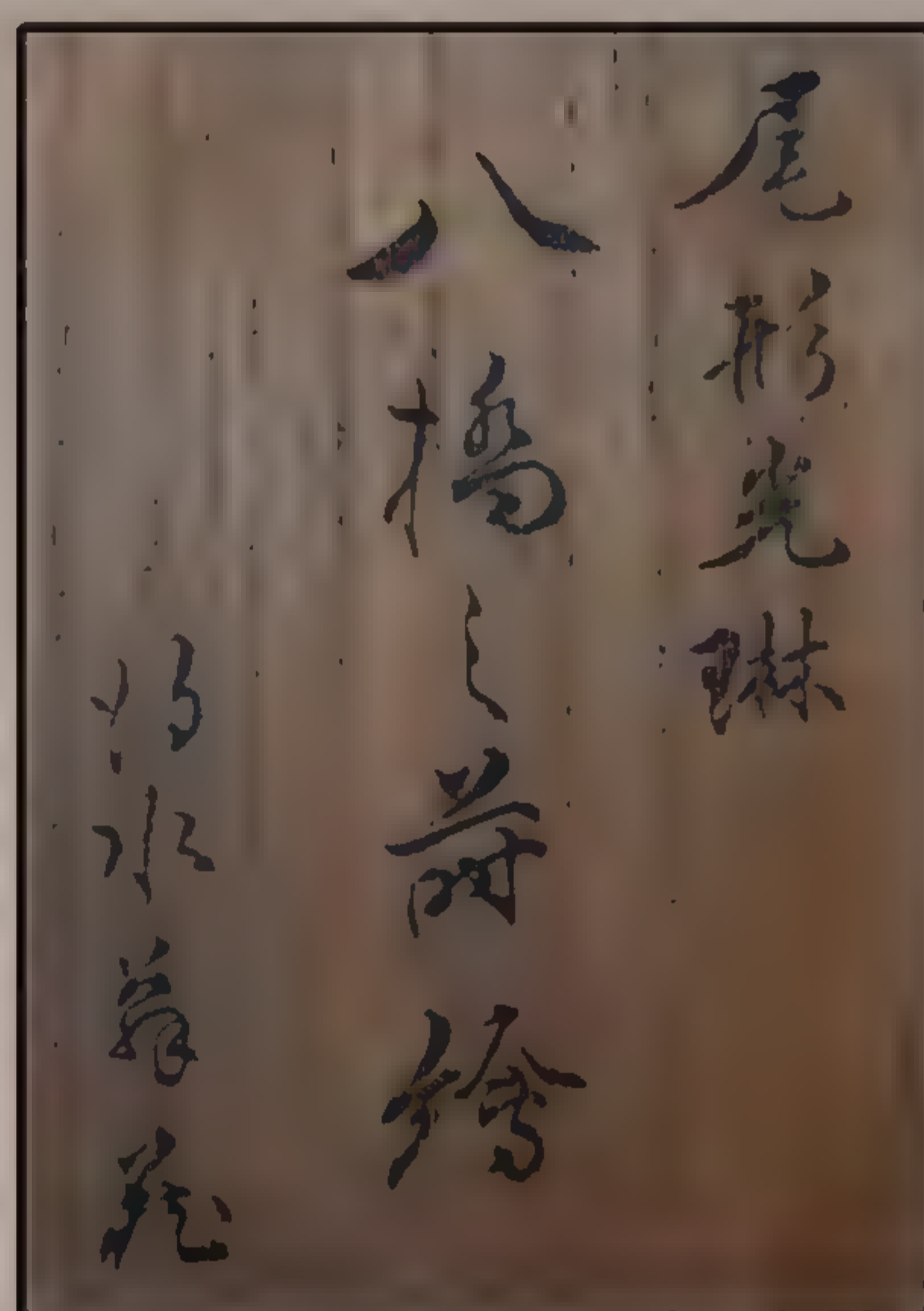




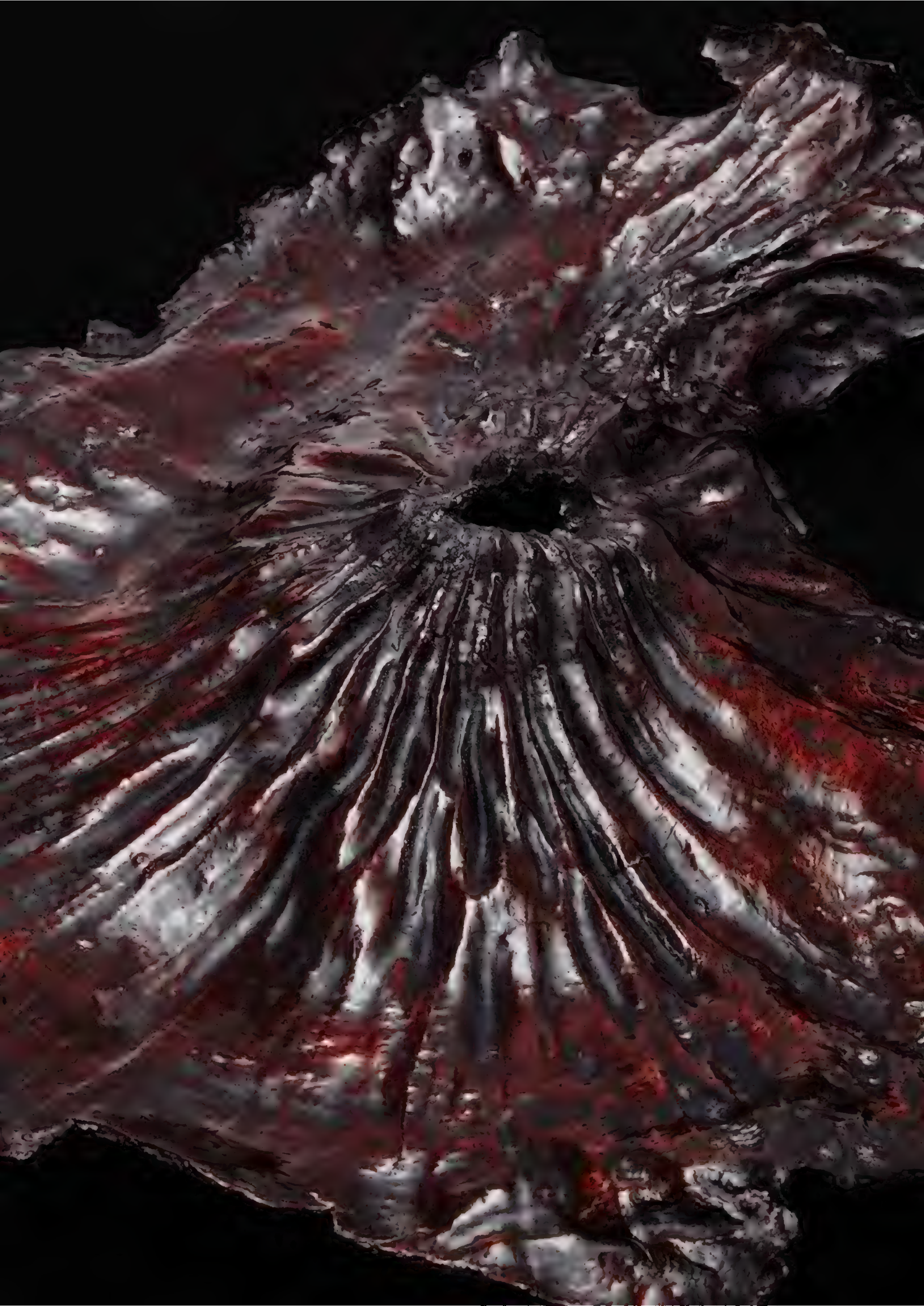














28

**KŌ-BON KAYŌBOKU**

Awasebako with hakogaki. Incense  
tray lotus leaf-shape

Signed by Mizunotoi

Japan

Edo period

19th century

Wood and urushi lacquer

10,5 cm x 51 cm x 43 cm

Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Galerie Mingei

M.: + 33 (0)6 09 76 60 68

E.: [mingei.arts.gallery@gmail.com](mailto:mingei.arts.gallery@gmail.com)

W: [www.mingei.gallery](http://www.mingei.gallery)

“Wooden lotus leaf. I don't know what kind of wood is used for this objet but it seems totally natural. The form is quite strange but its outline is not carved (sic!). Mr. Nakayama (?) of Nara wanted to obtain this piece and asked Mr. Imamura (?). The trace of carving of the back is well done and its patina is fantastic more and more with age. He thought the trace of carving of the backside is too much well done like the old patina.”

Signed: Mizunotoi (=a year of the 60 Chinese sexagenarian cycle, 1923), late Autumn, Master Kan'un

Kōdō (香道), “the way of fragrance”, is the art of appreciating Japanese incense. Kōdō includes all aspects of the incense ceremony, from the tools (kōdō-gu), to activities such the incense-comparing games kumikō and genjikō. Kōdō is one of the three classical Japanese arts of refinement, along with kadō for flower arrangement, and chadō for the tea ceremony.

During a kōdō ceremony, participants “listen” to fragrances exhaled by scented woods burned according to rules codified towards the end of the 14th century.













29

**AMIDA BUDDHA**

Sculpture

Japan

Kamakura period

13th or 14th century

Gilt bronze

Height: 22 cm

Price: 18.500 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Gregg Baker Asian Art

M.: +32 468 00 56 85

E.: [info@japanesescreens.com](mailto:info@japanesescreens.com)W: [www.japanesescreens.com](http://www.japanesescreens.com)

Increased activity of the Jōdō sect from the early Kamakura period ignited great interest in the worship of Amida, resulting in a strong demand for devotional images. Bronze sculptures such as this are thought to take their inspiration from a triad group of Amida and two attendant bodhisattvas enshrined at Zenkōji Temple, Nagano Prefecture. This model group was purportedly brought from the Korean kingdom of Kudara when Buddhism was introduced into Japan in the 6th century.

Belief in Amida as Lord of the Western Paradise rose in popularity during the late 10th century. Based primarily on the concept of salvation through faith, it was not only a religion which appealed to a broad range of people, but also a direct assertion of piety against the dogmatic and esoteric ritual of the more traditional Tendai and Shingon sects. In Amida's Western Paradise the faithful are reborn, to progress through various stages of increasing awareness until finally achieving complete enlightenment.

For a similar bronze figure see: Victor Harris and Ken Matsushima, *Kamakura: The Renaissance of Japanese Sculpture 1185-1333*, (British Museum, London, 1991), p. 124-125, no. 38.

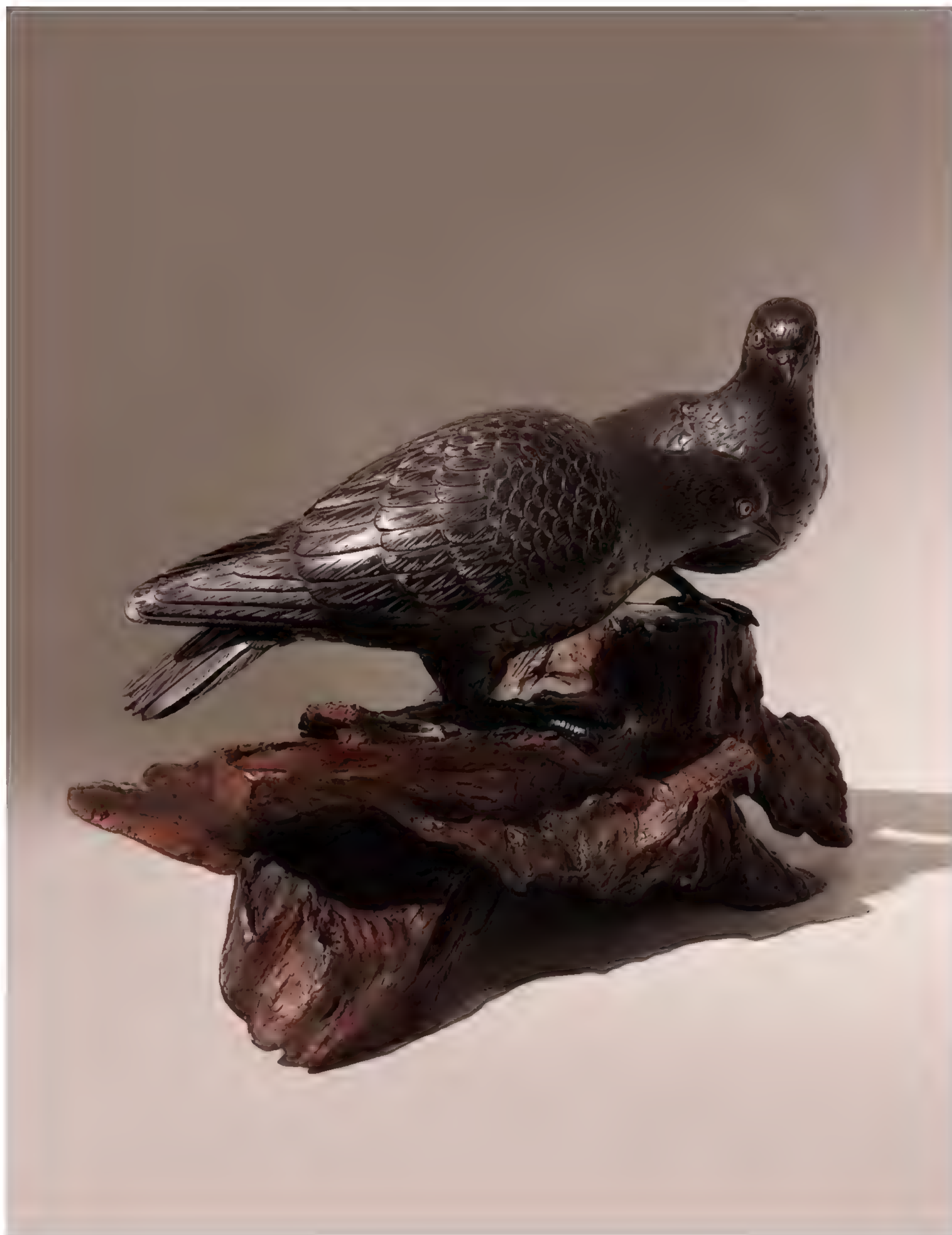
The result of Oxford Authentication Ltd thermoluminescence test, N120e15, is consistent with the dating of the object.













30

## A PAIR OF BRONZE DOVES (PIGEONS) ON A WOOD BASE

Meiji/Taisho-period  
(ca 1900-1920)

Wood

Height: 18,5 cm

Width: 27 cm

Price: 7.500 euros

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Kitsune Gallery

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W: www.kitsunegaroo.com

The cock-pigeon courting the hen. Each dove captured in a naturalistic pose, the eyes picked out in gilt and the feather details finely chiselled into the bronze. Both birds with a cartouche reading 鴻池 and supported on a natural driftwood base tinted a dark brown with two tiny crab-like metalwork creatures (almost invisible to the eye). This utmost fine okimono was most probably created by the Maruki company, Meiji/Taisho-period (ca 1900-1920). For a similar okimono we refer to Bonhams, 28 Jul 2009, San Francisco, lot 1636.











31

## OKADA HYŌKAN I (1904-1969)

Signed by: tea master Hōunsai  
Japan  
Taishō period  
1912-1926  
Wood, red lacquer, gold  
Height: 7,6 cm  
Diameter: 7,4 cm  
Inv. No. 19.020  
Price: 7.000 euros

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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E.: [info@galeriekommos.com](mailto:info@galeriekommos.com)  
W: [www.galeriekommos.com](http://www.galeriekommos.com)

With a signature inside the lid and an appraisal by tea master Hōunsai (\*1923).

With original wooden box, inscribed, signed and sealed.

Autumn tea caddy (*natsume*) with a red lacquer foundation on a wooden core, sprinkled with gold powder and polished. The classic motif of chrysanthemums flowering on a bamboo fence is applied in *takamaki-e*. The image usually refers to the famous "Poem of Home-coming" (*Guiqulaici*) by Chinese poet Tao Yuanming (365-427). The unique color of gold-powdered red lacquer just supports the impression of autumn by adding the color of leaves that just turn from golden yellow to red.

Okada Hyōkan I, was a Kyōto artist following the tradition of Kimura Hyōsai (1818-1885), founder of the Hyō-school (*Hyō-ha*), which is regarded as one of the main schools of Kyōto lacquer (the so called *Kyōnuri*). His real name was Kawase Shigetarō and founded his own tradition under his artist name Hyōkan. Today, his workshop, Hyōkan-dō, is working in the fourth generation. This is a very rare early example of the founding father of this important Kyōto lacquer family.

Comes with a fitted wooden box, signed *Hyōkan* and sealed *Shisshō Okada Hyōkan zō in* ("Sealed and made by lacquer master Okada Hyōkan"). Inside the lid is an inscription by the 15th head (*iemoto*) of the Urasenke tea ceremony school, Hōunsai (\*1923): *Kiku maki-e dai-natsume, Konichi* ("Large gold lacquer tea caddy with Chrysanthemums, [from the] Konichi [tea room]"), and his *kaō* in red lacquer in the inside of the tea caddy's lid.











32

**ŌTAGAKI  
RENGETSU  
(1791-1875)**

Signature: Rengetsu.

Japan

Early Meiji period

1869

Ink on paper

148 cm(h) x 26,1 cm (w)

Inv. No. 20.009.

Price: 7.500 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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E.: info@galeriekommos.com

W: www.galeriekommos.com

With inscribed wooden box, with authentication by Issui (1863-1945), dated 1943.

The beauty of simplicity seems to crystallize in this unique artwork by nun Ōtagaki Rengetsu (1791-1875) – the most famous female poet and artist of 19th Century in Japan. Praising the beautiful moment at the well-known Akashi Bay at a pure and calm full moon night in autumn, Rengetsu painted this scene in a few, carefully set brush strokes on paper. She wrote her own poem against an almost blank background (suggesting the open water surface) next to two pines under the full moon. The moon is painted in a single, rounded brushstroke like a Zen Buddhist *ensō* circle – the very symbol of enlightenment and emptiness, which neither words nor thoughts can express. Inexpressible, Rengetsu tells us, is also the tremendous beauty of the full moon night described in her poem:

ことのはの  
玉ひろはばや  
あきのよの  
月にあかしの  
うらづたひして

*Walking along Akashi Bay*

*This moonlit evening*

*Searching for*

*Fitting words*

*To tell of this beauty.*

Rengetsu signed this rare work with her age of 78, so the painting is datable to year 1869. The work was additionally certified within the fitting wooden box by Issui (1863-1945), the former head priest of the Jinkō-in temple in Kyōto, where Rengetsu spend the last decade of her life. The authentication by Rengetsu specialist Issui is dated to year Shōwa 18 (1943).

Collections:

Tokyo National Museum

Metropolitan Museum

Harvard Art Museum

National Gallery of Australia

Miho Museum

LACMA Museum

Philadelphia Museum of Art

and many more... estaba así en la caption

References:

Murakami Sodō: Rengetsu-ni zenshū, 1980, p. 26



とのかれどしるちむ  
あもみのあはあは  
うううううううう

あはあはあはあは













33

**TOKONAME TSUBO**

Japan

Muromachi period

Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Galerie Mingei

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W: [www.mingei.gallery](http://www.mingei.gallery)











34

## CARVED WOOD HABON LEAF TRAY

Japan

34,5 cm x 28 cm

Price:



### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Kitsune Gallery

M.: + 32 476 87 85 69

E.: arie.vos@kitsune.be

W: www.kitsunegaroo.com

A beautifully carved Kaga-bori tray in the shape of a geometric water lily or butterbur leaf upon which rests a large dark-lacquered beetle signed Josen enclosed in the original signed wooden box titled Mokucho Habon. Ueda Josen was born in Takamatsu in 1909, and studied the local tradition of lacquer and wood carving. He exhibited with the Teiten and Bunten National Exhibitions. In 1937 his work was selected by the Imperial Household. Post war he was a frequent exhibitor with the Nihon Dento Kogeiten National Crafts Exhibition. He is especially remembered for his ability to depict insects, a fleeting symbol of the ever changing seasons.

35

**SHŪHAN GENPŌ  
(1848-1922)**

Ensō Circle

Signed and sealed by Shōun.

Japan

Meiji period

Early 20th century

Ink on paper

124 cm (h) x 40 cm (w)

Inv. No. 17.003

Exhibition:

Art Gallery of New South Wales:

*Zen Mind, Zen Brush*

Publication:

*Japanese Ink Paintings from the*

*Gitter-Yelen collection*, 2006, p. 120.

Price: 4.000 euros

Comes with fitted wooden box.

A very delicate, thin *ensō* painting from the brush of Zen master Shūhan Genpō (1848-1922) who is often misleadingly named Sohan Genpō in English transcriptions. Shūhan Genpō has been the 468th head monk of Japan's most famous Zen temple Daitoku-ji in Kyōtō. He might be better known by his monk name Shōun, meaning "Pine Cloud", with which he often signed his works like this one. As a leading disciple of famous Zen painter Nakahara Nantenbō (1839-1925), Shūhan Genpō was also a skilled calligrapher and painter who created many Zenga.

This *ensō* may have influenced the work by Jiro Yoshihara (1905-1972), one of the leading figures of the Japanese post-war movement Gutai, who painted also a very thin *ensō* in oil on canvas.

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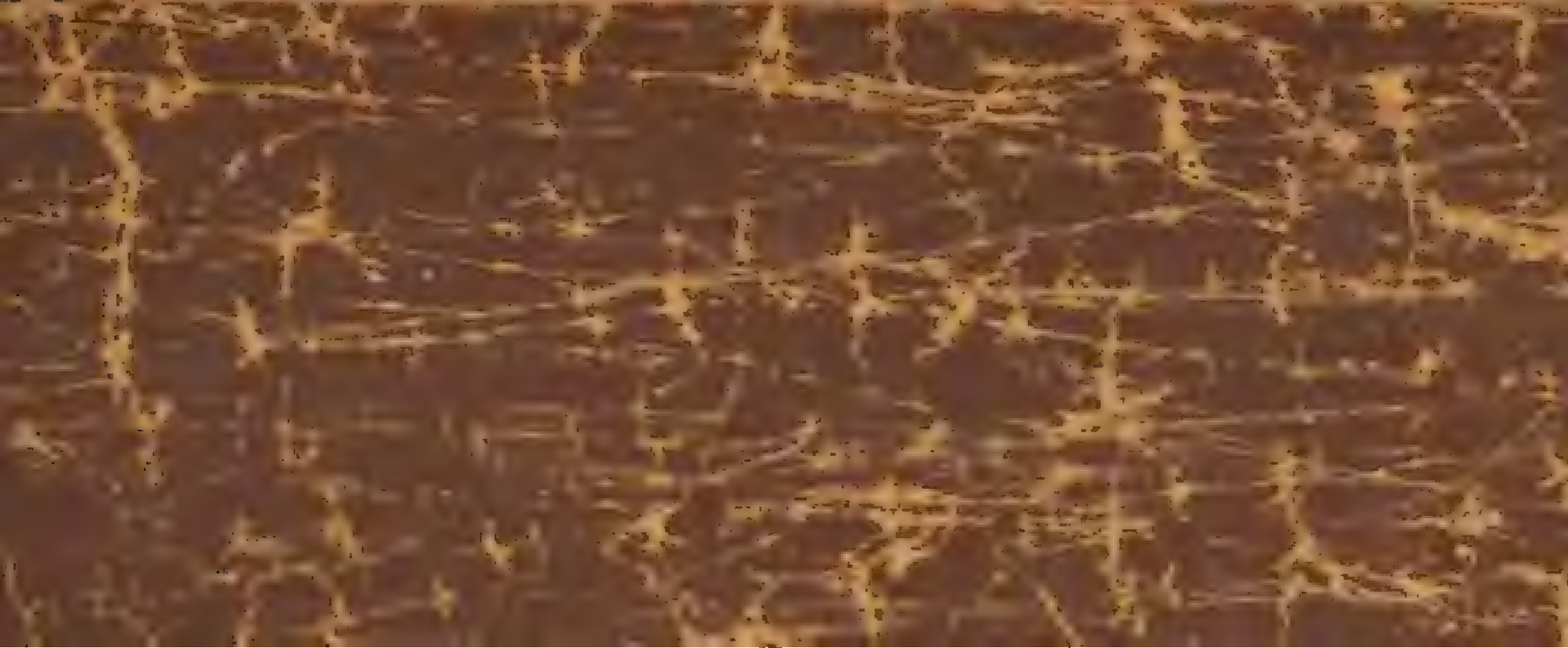


Handwritten Chinese calligraphy in a cursive style, reading from right to left: 吳昌碩畫 (Wu Changshuo Hua).





Multiple columns of dense, handwritten Chinese text in black ink, covering the middle section of the page. The text is organized into several vertical columns, typical of traditional Chinese manuscript layout.







36

**MOCHIZUKI GYOKKEI  
(1874-1938)**

Hotei Pointing at the Moon  
Signed and sealed by Mochizuki  
Gyokkei.

Japan

Late Meiji / early Taishō period

Ink and light colors on silk

120 cm (h) x 64 cm (w)

Inv. Nr. 18.016

Price: 6.500 euros

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W: [www.galeriekommos.com](http://www.galeriekommos.com)

With original wooden box with inscription and authentication by his son, Mochizuki Gyokusei (1900-1951), dated 1950.

Mochizuki Gyokkei, the fifth heir of the Gyokusen painting tradition (also just known as “Kyōto school”) did not only excel in the natural rendition of flowers and animals, but in figure painting as well – as this fine example shows. In an unusual horizontal composition that generates a quite intimate atmosphere, Gyokkei rendered the famous half-legendary Zen monk Hotei pointing at the moon. The portly monk is depicted carrying a large cloth bag in his left hand while pointing the finger of his right hand towards the rising moon. The abbreviated scene and suggestive use of empty space is associated with Zen monk painters of medieval times. Gyokkei followed in this tradition, however, gave it a new meaning when his Hotei is not showing something abstract above him but more near to earth at the horizon. The moon, which is often understood as the symbol of enlightenment, seems here not to be something far away, but as something that seems in reach for every man.

The painting is another fine example of Gyokkei's accurate brushwork which he inherited by the training through his father Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834-1913) in the Gyokusen family style tracing back to his great-grandfather Mochizuki Gyokusen (1692-1755). The old family studio combined elements of Chinese painting under influences by Shen Nanping as well as Japanese painting with influences by western traditions.

The painting is signed *Mochi Gyokkei*, and there is an interesting coincidence to be noted here: the first character of his name alone stands for the full moon, the 15th day of the Japanese lunar calendar. Red seal reads *Gyokkei*. The old, original wooden box is inscribed on the outside by Gyokkei: *Hotei shōgetsu zu* (“Painting of Hotei Viewing the Moon”). The inside of the box bears an inscription and authentication by his son, the sixth heir of the Gyokusen tradition Mochizuki Gyokusei (1900-1951), dated to year 1950.

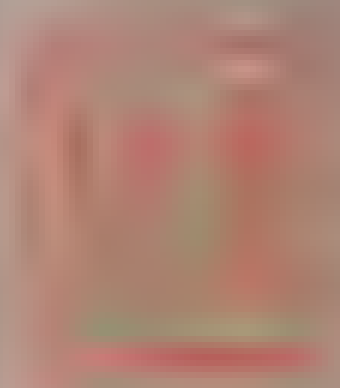
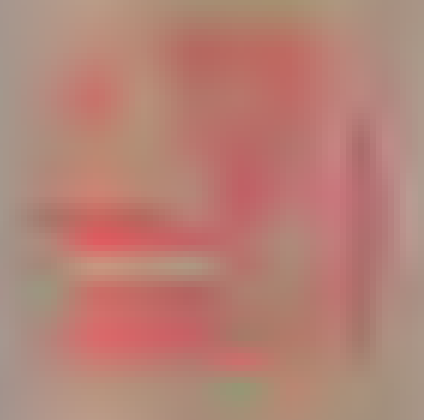








玉溪翁真蹟  
神主月玉成題鑑



## 37

TAKAHASHI DŌHACHI (1811-1879)  
(ATTR.)

Rare Rengetsu-style Flower Vase  
with Autumn Poem  
Signed by: Rengetsu  
Japan  
Late Edo period  
1960s  
Glazed stoneware with iron-brown  
inscription  
H 24,0 x Diam. 14,0 cm  
Inv. No. 20.006  
Price: 3.500 euros

## OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Galerie Kommos  
M.: +49 (0)30 9854 1123  
E.: info@galeriekommos.com  
W: www.galeriekommos.com

Ōtagaki Rengetsu is possibly the most famous female poet of 19th Century and known for her excellent skills in calligraphy and pottery. It was after the death of her stepfather in 1832, when Rengetsu began to make her extraordinary pottery, which she usually inscribed with her own *waka* (31-syllable classical poem) and sold to support herself. With her unique combination of pottery, calligraphy and poetry, Rengetsu gained large recognition during her lifetime far beyond the borders of Kyōto and her pottery style was named *Rengetsu-yaki* ("Rengetsu pottery").

By inspiring many artists with her works, some potter friends soon began to reproduce similar works under her guidance. Such well-known potters are for example Issō (dates unknown) and Kuroda Kōryō (1823-1895?). This cream white glazed flower vase of irregular style with iron-brown inscription of a Rengetsu poem, however, can be possibly attributed to her friendly potter Takahashi Dōhachi III (1811-1879). It is documented that Dōhachi III, coming from an important lineage of Kiyomizu potters, worked with the same materials. Also, the style of calligraphy is similar to some of his other known Rengetsu works. The vase is made with a high artistic level, however, there is no stamp or signature indicating its maker.

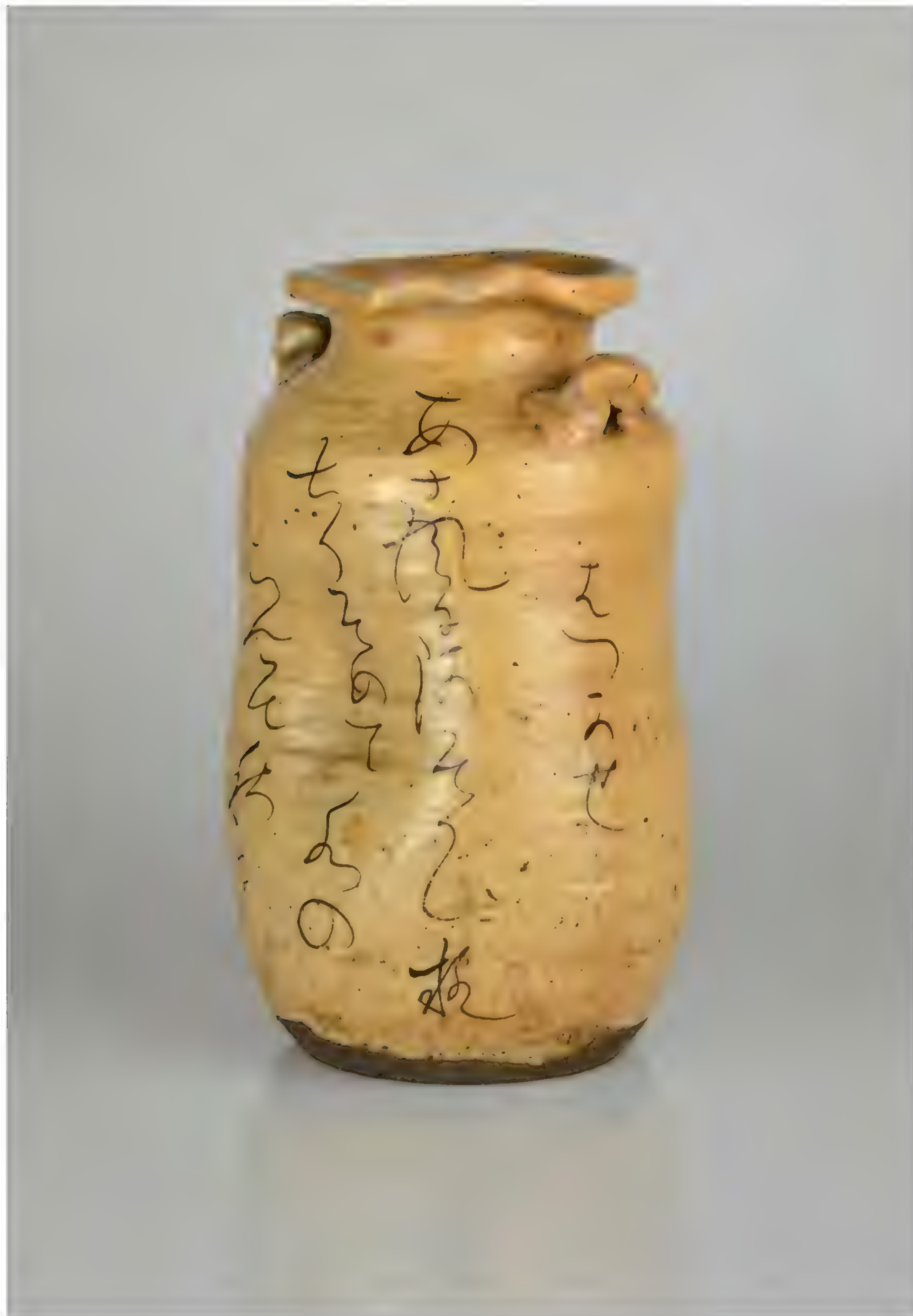
The inscribed Rengetsu poem has been published in 1870 in her first poem anthology *Ama no karumo*, where it can be found under number 116 as opener of the autumn chapter. Quite a good match, it seems, since the poem speaks of the beginning autumn itself:

あさ風に  
河そひ柳  
ちりそめて  
水のしらべそ  
秋に成りゆく

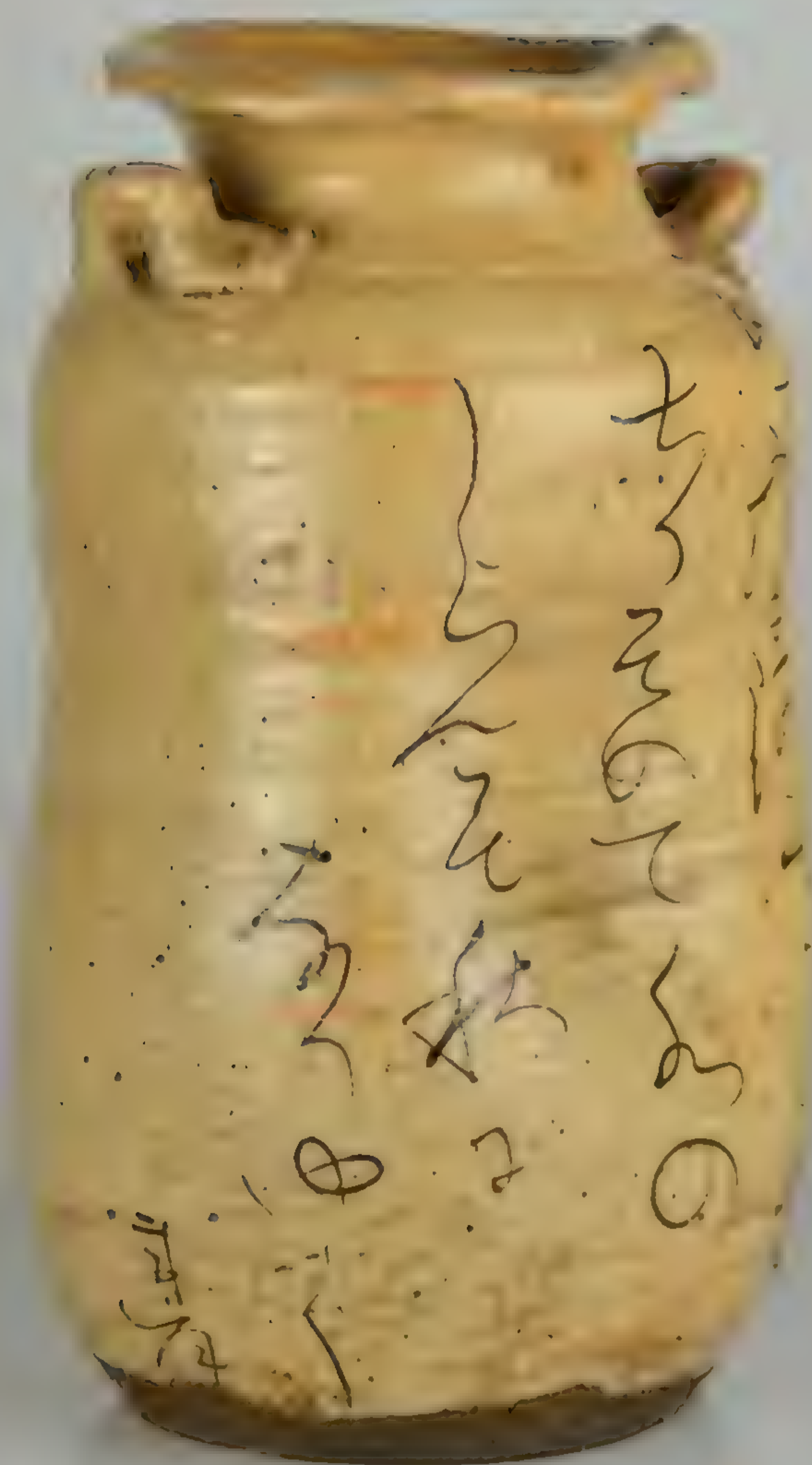
*In the morning breeze  
a riverbank willow  
scatters its leaves  
into the flowing waters —  
so autumn begins...*















38

## HYAKUNYO JIHŌ (1731 – 1804)

A skull, bones and calligraphy,  
hanging scroll

Signed by Hyakunyo.

Japan

Edo period

18th century

Ink on paper

Scroll: 125 cm x 67 cm

Painting: 34,5 cm x 57,5 cm

Price:



### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Gregg Baker Asian Art

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Inscribed: Mercy. Children are treasures. The path will open if you follow Buddha's teaching. The world is full of hindrances and doubts but also hopes. When you see the smoke rise from the funeral pyre, tomorrow may be your turn.

Signed: Hyakunyo

Right: Hakuhōdō (lit. The White Phoenix Hall)

Left, upper: Hakunyo

Left, lower: Shōmon Jihō

Hyakunyo Jihō (1731 – 1804)

Hyakunyo was born in Omi-cho of Shiga prefecture and entered the Tendai sect complex on Mount Hiei where he spent most of his adult life before returning to his home at Omi-cho. After his return he built a small temple and became an important part of the local community. Hyakunyo often painted for his supporters as a token of his gratitude.

Works by the artist can be found in the collection of: the James and Marilyn Alsdorf Collection, USA.

Handwritten text in a vertical column, likely a title or address, written in a cursive script.



Small handwritten text or a signature located below the circular seal.





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39

**BIZEN TOKKURI**

Sake bottle

Japan

Momoyama period (1573-1603)

16th century

22,5 cm x 22,5 cm x 28 cm

Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Galerie Mingei

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Bizen Ceramics (Bizen-yaki) is a type of Japanese ceramic originally produced in Bizen Province, present-day Okayama Prefecture.

It is characterized by high physical resistance, its brown-red color, the absence of glaze, as well as external traces resulting from firing in kilns.

Bizen ware was traditionally produced in and around the village of Imbe in Bizen province, from where it received its name. It is therefore also known as Imbe or Inbe ware. It has ties to Sue pottery from the Heian period in the 6th century, and made its appearance during the Kamakura period of the 14th century.

Bizen was considered one of the Six Ancient Kilns by the scholar Koyama Fujio. It experienced its peak during the Momoyama period of the 16th century. During the Edo period, the Ikeda lords of the Okayama domain continued to support the kilns and gave special privileges to families who operated them. The rustic quality of Bizen made it popular for use in Japanese tea ceremony. Ware of the early phase is called old Bizen style (古備前派 Ko-Bizen-ha).

Bizen is characterized by significant hardness due to high temperature firing; its earthen-like, reddish-brown color; absence of glaze, although it may contain traces of molten ash resembling glaze; and markings resulting from wood-burning kiln firing.

The clay found in Imbe is sticky and fine, with a high iron content and, traditionally, much organic matter that is unreceptive to glazing. For some potters this is an inadequate material, since it has weak characteristics such as high shrinkage and relatively low fire resistance. Most Bizen ware is not coated with a glaze because of this shrinkage, since any applied glaze would peel off during the firing process. Due to its low fire resistance it cannot withstand rapid high-temperature changes, so the firing has to be done gradually. However, the soil also has beneficial properties, such as plasticity. The high strength of Inbe clay causes it to retain its form, making it tough even without glaze.

# 40

## SHISHI

Japan  
Edo period  
19th century  
Hagi ware  
Price on request

### OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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41

**MORIBON**

Paulownia leaf shaped fruit tray  
 Ikeda Sakumi, gō Fumikichi (1886-  
 1955)  
 Japan  
 1912-1940  
 Mulberry wood (Kuwa)  
 12 cm x 37 cm x 37 cm  
 Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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A remarkable naturalistic study in which the artist uses the crevices of the wood to suggest the tearing of the leaf eaten in places by insects.

This allegorical representation of passing time evokes a vanity and the emptiness of human passions and activities.

In Japan, the paulownia (kiri) leaf is one of the emblems honoring deserving people.

This work also evokes the annual contemplation of cherry blossoms (hanami) and fall colors (momijigari) where the most splendid flowers and leaves are said to be the moment before they fall.

A metaphor that invites you to live and die in the same way.

Ikeda Sakumi, whose artist name (gō) is Fumikichi was born in Kaga, Ishikawa Prefecture.

He studied with Osaka-based woodcarver Takemura Eiraku and first exhibited in 1922, then exhibited regularly (1928- 1932-1933) at the Teiten, the annual exhibition of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts.





42

**A SLATE SUZURI**

Japan

Ink stone

Height: 21 cm

Length: 19 cm

Width: 11 cm

Price:

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

Kitsune Gallery

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Isseki was active in the Shinshu district, the current Nagano prefecture, during the Taisho-period (1912-1926) and the early Showa-period (1926-1989). The artist manipulated a natural slate stone from the Dragon Valley through cutting, chiseling and polishing to reveal the bright colors hidden inside the natural slate, creating an entirely new stone in shape and surface design. This means that nothing has left from its raw state and that, although looking natural, the final result evolved from the artist's treatment. It is an amazing artwork in terms of time consuming labor and craftsmanship.

This ink stone (suzuri) reminds of a scholar's rock (suiseki - small naturally occurring mountain landscape shaped rock) but cannot be categorized as such, since it is entirely reshaped. Ink stones were used for calligraphy and painting with East Asian ink (solidified into inksticks). Usually, some water is applied onto the ink stone (by means of a dropper, referred to as "suiteki" to control the amount of water) before the bottom end of the inkstick is placed on the grinding surface and then gradually ground to produce the ink. The Chinese grind their ink in a circular motion with the end flat on the surface whilst the Japanese push one edge of the end of the inkstick back and forth. One can still see the marks of grinding on this suzuri. Note that the artist cut the slate stone horizontally into two parts, leaving areas available, permitting to "click" the upper part onto the bottom part. The whole concept of this ink stone is created in utmost perfection and so is the grinding surface, which is smoothly chiseled and polished to a satin ground (as should be).









